



together before spawning. The eggs are broadcast on the bottom. The northern hogsucker is host to the immature form of the elk toe mussel.

Habitats

interior rivers and streams; Mississippi River

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

eastern two-thirds of Iowa

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.

northern hog sucker

Hypentelium nigricans

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Order:	Cypriniformes
Family:	Catostomidae

Features

The northern hog sucker is disproportionately shaped with a large, square, bony head and slender tapered body and tail. Its body is mottled. The broad space between the eyes is indented and the eyes are closer to the back edge of the gill cover than to the snout. Its lips are thick and covered with wart-like bumps. Adults usually are eight to 15 inches long and weigh one-third to 1 1/2 pounds.

Natural History

The northern hog sucker prefers clear streams, especially riffles where the current is rapid and the bottom of gravel, rocks, or boulders. It rarely is found in the Mississippi River or lakes. It has never been found in rivers in the Missouri River drainage. It eats mainly immature aquatic insects, small mollusks (snails, mussels), and crustaceans. It spawns during its third year in late April or May. The male fans the gravel clean in riffles or at the downstream end of pools, but does not build a nest. Hog suckers school